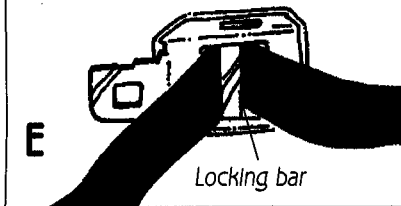
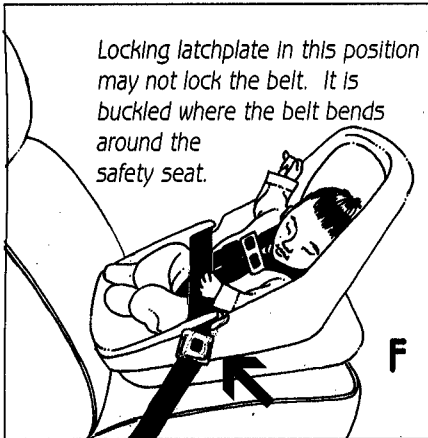


Bar in locking latchplate holds the lap belt tight once it is buckled.



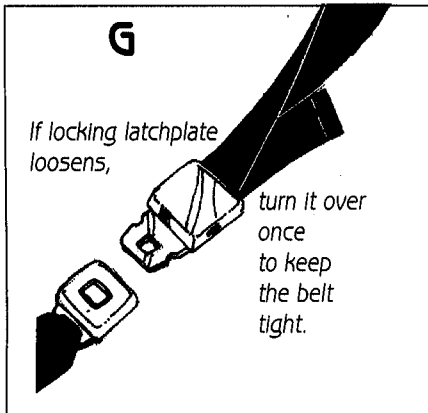
Locking latchplate in this position may not lock the belt. It is buckled where the belt bends around the safety seat.



G

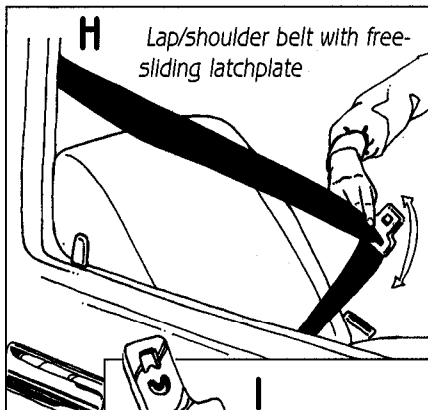
If locking latchplate loosens,

turn it over once to keep the belt tight.



H

Lap/shoulder belt with free-sliding latchplate



Look for a label on the belt telling how to keep it tight.



How to Check If A Belt Retractor Locks

There are two kinds of retractors that take up slack in the belt:

1. An "emergency locking retractor" locks only during a crash or sudden stop. During normal driving you can pull the belt in and out easily. Check it in a deserted parking lot with your lap/shoulder belt on. If you slam on the brakes while driving about 10 mph, you will feel the belt "grab" you.
2. An "automatic locking retractor" locks whenever you stop pulling it out. To check for an automatic locking retractor, pull the lap belt out and stop. When you pull on it again, you will find it is locked. This kind of belt will hold the safety seat tightly. Take the slack out by pushing the webbing back into the retractor.

"Switchable" Retractors

A switchable retractor works well with safety seats. It is an emergency locking retractor that can be switched to an automatic locking retractor. The retractor may be on either a lap belt or a lap/shoulder belt. The belt usually has a label on it telling you how it works (I). You also can read about it in your vehicle owner's book.

In most cases, you switch the retractor by pulling the belt slowly all the way out until it goes no farther and you hear a click. It may pull out from the lap end or shoulder end. When you let the belt roll back, you will find that it locks every inch or so and will hold a safety seat tightly. In some vehicles, there is a button to push on the retractor instead. Again, check in the owner's book.

Belts with Locking Latchplates

Locking latchplates (E) work well with safety seats. They usually are found on lap belts in center rear seats. Lap/shoulder belts in many vehicles also have them. A locking bar prevents the belt from loosening once it is tightened.

To tighten this kind of belt, pull on the loose end of the lap belt or on the shoulder part of the lap/shoulder belt. This tightens the lap belt. Then test for tightness by pulling the safety seat forward and side to side.

If this kind of belt does not stay tight, see if the latchplate is fastened right at the place where the belt turns to go through the slot in the safety seat (F) or around its frame. In this position, the belt may slide through the latchplate. Turn the adjustable end of the belt over (G). This will keep it tightly locked in most vehicles. This also may help keep the belt from loosening slowly over time.

Lap/Shoulder Belt with a Free-Sliding Latchplate

This kind of belt (H) has one piece of belt webbing that slides through the latchplate even when the belt is buckled. It usually has an emergency locking retractor. It stays loose except in a crash or sudden stop. To lock this belt around a child safety seat, use a metal "locking clip." Some belts are labeled to tell you the locking clip is needed (I). First check to see if it has a switchable retractor that allows the retractor to stay locked (see above).